



# Mechanical Contractors Association of Canada



## MECHANICAL CONTRACTING CAREERS

### CONSTRUCTION SUPERVISOR - FIRST LEVEL

Are you a good leader? Can you work well with others? Are you interested in a variety of construction trades? If so, First Level Construction Supervisor might be the career for you!

#### Also known as

- Construction Foreman
- Site Foremen
- Foreman
- Front Line Construction Supervisor

#### What the work is like

First level supervisors are experienced tradespersons who possess all the necessary technical skills of their particular trade or occupation in order to oversee and coordinate the hands-on activities of journeymen and apprentice tradespeople on construction job sites. They hold primary responsibility for supervising the safety, quality and productivity of construction projects.

First level construction supervisors work in all four construction sectors: New Home Building and Renovation, Heavy Industrial, Institutional and Commercial, and Civil Engineering. To learn more about the construction sectors, check out [Inside the industry](#).

#### Your duties

As a First Level Construction Supervisor, your duties may include the following:

- supervising, coordinating and scheduling the daily activities of construction tradespeople
- coordinating work activities with subcontractors
- establishing methods to meet work schedules and coordinating work activities with other departments/subcontractors/supervisors/managers
- Resolving work problems and recommending measures to improve productivity and product quality
- ordering materials and supplies
- training or arranging for the training of workers in job duties, safety procedures and company policies
- ensuring standards for safe working conditions are observed
- recommending personnel actions such as hirings and promotions
- preparing schedules, work progress, production and other reports
- possibly managing the operations of one's own company
- possibly supervising, coordinating and scheduling the activities of related apprentices, helpers and labourers

## Work conditions

The standard work week for a First Level Construction Supervisor is 40 hours (8 hours a day, 5 days a week). As with many careers in construction, there are peak periods that will require you to work overtime. The number of additional hours you work each week depends on the construction sector and region you work in, and will vary from one job to the next.

As a First Level Construction Supervisor, you will work on a construction site and coordinate with project managers to ensure accurate and up-to-date reports. Some supervisors may also perform duties of their trade, working alongside those they oversee.

As with all careers in the construction industry, safety is the top priority. First level construction supervisors are key personnel in ensuring workplace safety, and they must know and apply occupational health and safety rules and best practices. They are trained to work safely and wear personal protective equipment such as hard hats, gloves and steel-toed boots whenever they are on construction sites.

## Essential Skills

Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) has identified nine Essential Skills that are necessary to succeed in the workplace. These skills provide the foundation for learning all other skills and apply to most construction careers. Best of all, you can learn and improve on these skills in school, on the job and during your everyday life.

The most important Essential Skills for first level construction supervisors are the following:

- Thinking Skills – finding and evaluating information to make decisions, solve problems and plan and organize job tasks
- Oral Communication – conveying or exchanging information verbally
- Reading Text – reading various types of documents of varying complexity
- Document Use – reading and interpreting documents to extract information
- Working with Others – interacting with co-workers to get the job done

Click [here](#) to see how these skills are applied on the job. You can also [click here](#) to learn more about Essential Skills.

## Certification

First level construction supervisors often begin their career as a certified journeyperson in their trade of choice, and advance to a supervisory role by demonstrating solid leadership skills and excellent on-the-job performance. Additional training will likely be required, and some candidates for a first level supervisor position have upgraded their skills by completing additional trades or supervisory courses.

Alberta has an Industrial Construction Crew Supervisor occupation that requires a combination of training and on-the-job experience. For more information [click here](#).

## Where to study in Canada

Check out the trades in the [Pick a career](#) section for information on where to learn a specific trade.

The Canadian school listed below offers a program specific to construction supervision. In addition, local construction organizations and associations offer additional courses. To find out who to contact, check out [Related links](#).

### British Columbia

[British Columbia Institute of Technology](#)

## Salary ranges

First Level Construction Supervisor hourly wages vary depending on the contract, the company, and local and national economic conditions. Typical hourly wage ranges for first level construction supervisors (based on national or regional averages) are as follows:

### Inexperienced and or newly appointed first level construction supervisors

Region	Typical hourly rate
National average	\$16-\$18
Atlantic Canada	\$12-\$16
Ontario and Quebec	\$16-\$19
Western Canada	\$16-\$19

Based on national averages, inexperienced workers can earn annual salaries ranging from \$33,000 to \$37,000 per year, not including overtime.

### Experienced first level construction supervisors

Region	Typical hourly rate
National average	\$22-\$26
Atlantic Canada	\$18-\$22
Ontario and Quebec	\$24-\$26
Western Canada	\$25-\$30

Based on national averages, experienced workers can earn annual salaries ranging from \$46,000 to \$54,000 per year, not including overtime.

### Highly experienced first level construction supervisors

Region	Typical hourly rate
National average	\$30-\$35
Atlantic Canada	\$29-\$32
Ontario and Quebec	\$33-\$35
Western Canada	\$36-\$38

Based on national averages, highly experienced workers can earn annual salaries ranging from \$62,000 to \$73,000 per year, not including overtime.

Construction work can involve overtime, so your total annual salary will vary depending on the number of overtime hours you work.

In addition to the hourly rate, many construction workers receive statutory holiday and vacation pay. Depending on the contract, you may also receive benefits such as group insurance for health, dental, and vision care, as well as retirement packages and training benefits up to 30% of your hourly rate. If you are self-employed, it is up to you to arrange your own benefits.

**Building your career**

With experience and additional training, you can progress to more senior positions such as general foreman or project manager, as well as management roles.

Depending on your trade specialty, there may be some mobility among jobs. Generally, however, there is little or no intertrade mobility.

As with most construction careers, your skills are portable. If you want to move, you can take your skills with you.